THE CANALS.

Thurlow Weed Applauds Governor Tilden's Message.

HOW THE PEOPLE'S MONEY IS STOLEN.

Hon. Samuel B. Ruggles on the History of the Canal System.

WHAT THE CANALS HAVE COST AND PAID.

A Forty Years Study of the Great Subject.

Necessity of Deepening the Waterway to Seven Feet.

STATISTICS OF THE CARRYING TRADE.

Legislative and Official Action in Reference to Canal Enlargement.

USELESSNESS OF THE LATERAL CANALS

Speaker McGuire and the "Fighters" in Albany.

So much talk has been excited by Governo Tilden's message in reserence to the canals, the costs of the repairs to them and of their operation, and so many and various motives have been exposed by interested talkers—each of which has been declared to be the one which impelled the Executive of the State to make an onslaught upon the notorious "Canal Ring"-that the interest in the message and the discussion upon it has increased daily. Senator Jarvis Lord's truculent declarations did more to call attention to the message than anything else. They must have aroused in the minds of some native people the idea that Governor Tilden had drowned the Senator's honor in the Eric Canal, and that while the legislator fished for that of which he had been despotted he savagely denounced his despoiler. Whatever the initiated blought of Senator Lord's proclamation most of them wanted to know what Mr. Thurlow thought of Governor Tilden's message. It was to assover this that the writer called at Mr. Weed's residence, in Twelfth street, yesterday.

Mr. Weed has been so long acquainted with the

politics of this State, following them to the ends of their numerous ramifications, that the affairs of every public department have been in his mind as if in a book which he might open at will. it was important to a certain degree for the public to know how he read the canal message, or rather to know what are his deductions from it. Mr. Weed being opposed politically to Governor Tilden, a commendation of the message and its design coming from him would be a great compliment to the Executive. Being thoroughly conversant with the affairs of the Canal Department, for him to condemn the message would be to burt its induence greatly in the Legislature and among the public.

The writer called at Mr. Weed's residence first at about three o'clock yesterday afternoon, but was informed that the veteran politician would not be at home before six o'clock. Shortly pefore that hour a second call was made, and then the caller was ushered into a pleaslittle library just beyond the door. The draughts of air caused by the opening and shutting of the outer door, are excluded from this sanctum by a screen draped with the American flag. Thus the patriotic spirit of Weed is evinced to the visitor as soon as he enters the ballway. Cosily ensconced in a chair be fore a flaming fire the reporter awaited Mr. Weed's

GOVERNOR TILDEN COMMENDED. When the veteran entered the object of the

emphatically :-

"I am convinced that Governor Tilden has done a good thing in exposing the mismanagement of the capais. He has at the same time done a vary bold thing. He has put himself in opposition to an enormous and unscrupulous power, which is ramified through the central part of the State. This power has been growing for many years. There are men connected with the 'Canal Ring' who have been contractors since twenty-five years

said. reflectively:--"Yes; just so. There are hope now who were connected with the construction of the original canal. The "Ring" has grown enormously within ten years. It has enkinds. Those honest but weak officials who could not be tempted with money its members have always found means to begutte. Fraud in the conatruction of the canals and in the use of the since the original Erie Canal was finished in 1825. HONEST WORK.

Breaking his consecutive narrative, Mr. Weed remarked:-- 'Pernaps you do not know that the original Erie Canal was built within the cost which was estimated for it. It was. The engineers of that canal were men of great original genius and were men of integrity. Though they had nothing to guide them in their work, for there were no great canals either here or in Europe; though they had to go on in the dark, they made their surveys and they constructed the canal well, and without stretching their expenditures even to the limit of the sum which had been set to meet them.

BEGINNINGS OF THEFT. "Although the contractors on the original work were not iraudulent, they grew sharp as they progressed, and after 1825 the era of theft began with those of them who continued to work on the tanal. Yet the thefts did not reach great proportions until about the middle of the war time, when public morality was generally unsettled. The first peculations were committed with the aid of officials meant to watch over the interests of the people in the canals. The first wholelocks. And the thefts have continued to be perpetrated, with the knowledge at least of such officials. The fact is, the men who have been chosen to care for the Canal Department have who have not been dishonest have been weak. All parties have erred in selecting persons to be officials in the Capal Department. HOW IT WAS DONE.

"The way in which frauds were first committed," said Mr. Weed, "was through the agency of dishonest superintendents of the canal. Each superintendent had a section of the canal to care for, and therefore and many opportunities to be profitably dishonest. Or course, those who were dissonest gataered around them contractors who were like them in principle. After the superintentents lost their powers, the contractors lound a means to defraud the State. They would finish their work under their contracts and then apply to the Legislature for relief, alleging that their expenditures had been greatly in extess of the amount they had been expected to be, n consequence of some extraordinary natural impediment to their progress. Then the Legislature would pass bills reterring the examination and settlement of their claims to the Canal Board. The passage of the bills siways settled the claims, for the Cauni Board never rejected them. Its

members were in the grasp of the members of the ring, and could not and never desired to reject the claims. Still, notwithstanding all these things, the thefts of the Canal Ring were not very great before the time of the latter part of the war. At that period his members had become greatly experienced, and they devised the system

POWER OF THE RING. The fact that they could not carry this system into effect without the connivance of the canal officials shows the power of their ring. The State Engineer's Department has the preparation of estimates for all work upon the canals and the supervision of the work. Its engineers should know every stone laid and its proper cost to the State, every foot of earth delved and its proper cost. The State Engineer's Department is greatly responsible for the trauds committed upon the State Treasury by Erie canal contractors !!

Mr. Weed, continuing his narrative, explained the working of the system of low bids, by means of watch so much money has been extracted from the State Treasury. It has been made clear to the readers of the HERALD by Governor Tilden's Message.

ENOUGH STOLEN TO BUILD A SHIP CANAL. Upon finishing it the venerable and astute politician said :- "Yes, you may say, truthfully, that enough money has been stolen by the present Canal Ring to build a fine ship canal from Buffalo to Albany. It was the original purpose to construct such a canal, and if such great sums had not been stolen if the present system of canals had been a real benefit to the taxpayers instead of a burden, a ship canal would either now be built or be in course of construction."

SENATOR LORD WEIGHED. "What do you think, Mr. Weed," said the reporter, "of Senator Lord's assaults upon Gover-

"He had to say something, and he had to say it boldiy, especially as he is a member of the State Senate, and one of the bills exhibited as a specimen of the usual statements of contractors was that of his son. He had to say something, but I think he has said too much."

LOW TOLLS.
"Do you think, Mr. Weed, that the canal tolls ought to be reduced, or that improvements should be faithfully carried out by means of which traffic would be expedited on the canais and the iorwarders and boatmen be thus recompensed for the tolls they now pay?"

In response to this question Mr. Weed said :-"The question of reducing the canal toils has been agitated for a long time. Certainly something must be done for the traffickers on the canals. The competition of the railthe canals is so great that it affects the business of the boatmen and forwarders. If the improvements were made in the canals they would not only increase the speed of travelling upon them, but would also have the subsequent effect of reducing the tolls."

"Now, Mr. Weed" said the writer, "what do you think are the means by which this Canal Ring can be overthrown and the system under which it has worked can be done away with?"

"I thoroughly agree with the ideas of Governor Tilden. I jully indorse his Message, and I think he has done a grand service in initiating the overthow of a ring as powerful as that which formerly existed in Tammany Hall. The Governor should be applanded for his boldness. He has 'taken the built by the horns,' and in the struggle he is likely to overthrow the animal. He should be aided and encouraged in his task, for he is striving to benefit

These words ended Mr. Weed's remarks, and, hence, the interview. The Nestor of politicians, by which name it is so usual to call Mr. Weed. uttered his words as emphatically as his weak state would permit, and was thoroughly convinced that for Governor Tilden to break up the Canal Ring, composed of men of both parties, would be a fitting supplement to that official's labors against the great circle in the Tammany democratic party. within which the people's money went round and round, and Lever got outside.

SAMUEL B. RUGGLES' REPORT. AN INTERESTING STATEMENT ON THE RISE AND PROGRESS OF OUR CANAL SYSTEM-A FORTY

YEARS STUDY OF THE SUBJECT. The Chamber of Commerce has just published an exhaustive and very able report of the Committee on Railway and Canal Legislation, by Mr. Samuel B. Ruggles, its chairman, showing the progress, the cost and the present fiscal and commercial condition of the State canals, and proving that the highest exigencies of the city and State of New York not only, but the whole interior country north of the Ohio River demand the prompt securing of seven feet of water in the bed THE REPORT.

The report opens with a preliminary history of the State canal system, as follows :-

The chairman of the committee, on a former oceasion, in ormed the Chamber of his in tention, if it should become "necessary in order to remove any lingering prejudices or misapprenensions," to review to some extent some of the questions agitated in former years in respect to the necessity of enlarging the Erie Canal, to form part of a "History of the Efforts in New York, from 1835 to 1875, to Secure and Increase the Commerce of the West," He did not, however, propose, in such a work, to indulge in any criticism of the actions or the personal motives of any man or men, but to deal with public measures and their actual results. Still less does he propose, in the present paper, to overstep that legitimate field of historical inquiry, but rather to countne it, as far as practicable, to an impartial and unimpassioned exhibition of the fiscal aspect

in the present paper, to overstep that legitimate field of historical inquiry, but rether to counts it, as far as practicable, to an imparrial and unimpassoned exhibition of the facal aspect of the canals now on the eve, as it is hoped, of a fine and the present of the canals now on the eve, as it is hoped, of a fine and the present of the canals now of the eve, as it is hoped, of a fine and the present of the canals now of the eve, as it is hoped, of a fine and the present of the canals now of the place in the canals now of the present of the canals now of the uneven surrace of the proper ducing the isobor and cost of Iranii and transportation over the uneven surrace of the proper ducing the canal and the present in the canals of the present of t

temporary short comings or errors in judgment during the early portion of this all-important era, now to recall the singular fact that it was not thought necessary or important in any census taken by the United States or by the State of New York Defore the year 1840 to report or ascertain the quantities of the various cereais produced in the lettile soil overspreading so large a portion of our Continental Republic, and laying the very ioundation of all its weatth and power. So little, indeed, was the nation aware of its dormant agricultural strength, that great alarm was expressed by timid observers in 1836 and 1837, when considerable amounts of breadstuffs were temporarily imported into the United States from several of the European nations, so that the "wheat from the Black Sea?" was paraded in partias journais and even in grave public documents, to show how little reliance could be placed on any prospective estimate of the productive power of the grainfields of our own interior. Fortunately, these apprehensions did not affect the official action of all of our public functionaries, some of whom, with instinctive sagacity and by logical induction perceived, unaided by minute statistics, the magnitude of the luture in store for New York and her canals. As early as 1834 the Legislature and her canals. As early as 1834 the Legislature had directed

duction perceived, unaided by minute statistics, the magnitude of the future in store for New York and her canals. As early as 1834 the Legislature had directed

THE LOCKS ON THE ERIE CANAL

TO be doubled from Albany to Syracuse; but on the recommendation of Governor Marcy, zealously seconded by that truly distinguished Canal Commissioner, William C. Bouck, the law was repealed, and the chiargement of the whole canal, from Aloany to Buffalo, substituted by the act of the lith May, 1835. The dimensions of the enlargement were fixed by the canal Board, first at sixty-teet wide and six feet deep, but were subsequently changed to seventy feet by seven, after an ineffectual effort made by Commissioner Bouck to induce the Canal Board to fix them at eightly feet by eight. He had taken office during or shortly after the administration of Governor Clinton, and had then motibed or naturally possessed, much of the large and comprehensive spirit which had ever guided the public efforts of that clear-headed and larseeing public servant. It is justly due to the memory of Commissioner Bouck now to stand firmly by the enlargement as the greatest work of the sign, that on his removal in 1840 from the office of President of the Board of Canal Commissioners he earnestly exhorted his successor to stand firmly by the enlargement as the greatest work of the sign, and in he ovent togensent to any diminution of its dimensions.

With this brief preliminary outline, which, if necessary, may be hereafter filled up by other hands, the committee will now to proceed to show, by tables carsinily prepared for the Chamber, with condensed explanatory notes:—

First—The progress and cost, from 1835 to 1875, of the trunk canals, to be permanently preserved for the commerce of the State and the country.

Second—The total amount of debt incurred in the construction of all these works and its rand approach to final extinction.

Fourth—The total amount of debt incurred in the construction of all these works and its rand approach to final extinction.

object.

Stath—The leading particulars in respect to the quantities of cereals now carried yearly from the interior States to the seaboard, whether trrough our track canals or by competing routes by land COST OF THE ENLARGEMENT OF THE TRUNK CANALS. Dimensions or Eric Canal collary by Supplies Tolls. by the Canal Board, first at sixty leet wide by six leet deep, afterward increased to seventy leet by seven. Construction of the Black River and the Genesee Val-

ley can	Entarge-	treu in io	Total on all	CARLE COMMUNICATION	7 (2410) 004
Yaura.	ment of	wient of	the canain,	surplus tolls and	debt a
1835	Canal. \$31.810		laterai.	revenues.	yeur.
1835	53,313	1857.	977,550 1,206,663	1,130,856	6,326,90
Totals			2,184,213		
and Mea of the E terior Si if enlars tion sho value of transport	The report ins propositive Canal tates wou ged, to \$3, ald reach if these pr tation th merchand	of the a sing loans lestimate d increas 300 000 in 6,000,000, oducts in grough the	Lts. AIDED LSsembly C to expedit d that the e the year the year which was that year e canal we n return,	committee the entar growth of y tolks of the when their in 1853 seeking do the bottom be \$60 and be	the in the in the canal popula that the wnward
1839. c	ounter re	enate. es	ficially ma timated the and other	ie tolls of	1851 41

\$1,7.0,910, and the products to the Western States II to at \$2.8,09,743.

1 hey also proposed a reduction in the dimensions of the eniarged canal to 60 feet by 6, but it was not agreed to by either branch of the Legislature.

Eric. Oescop. Totals.

1833 \$1,163,193 - 1,640,070 843,247 9,308,120 1839. 2,238,839 - 3,655,460 1,14,031 10,785,830 1940 3,222,370 5,005,515 1,03,806 11,16,647 1841 2,518,309 - 3,647,214 1,775,160 6,306,374 1842 1,21,152 - 2,599,105 1,154,579 19,574,592 Misseel. 27,065 Total.\$10,685,431 - 15,547,375 5,656,131

	Eric.	Unwego.	Total.	Tolla.	Delt.
843	\$530,801	-	796,230	1,422,683	20,392,344
1844	413,692	-	712,419	1,751,599	20,713,900
845	155,192	-	333,717	1,637,427	19,693,04
846	70,012		162,507	2,2,2,801	17,028,240
847	62,361	-	162,276	2,831,834	16,748,745
Miscel	125,998		_		
Totals.	\$1,363,051		2.187.039	9.846.404	

ages to be paid to the contractors. Some of the awards for demands are included in the expenditures above the ages are included in the expenditures above the contractor of the awards of the awards of the contractor of the contractor of the contractor of the contractor of the surplus to by the contractor of the surplus to is to pay off within eighteen years all the canal debt their existing and also the general fund acet, of which \$5.000,000 had been incurred in the loan of the credit of the state to that amount to expect the contractor of the New York and a real Rairoad. It directed the Legislaure to apply the remainder of the

14.—PROGRESS OF THE WORKS BY INCREASED SURPLUS TOLLS 1892... 193,48 75,662 1,881,284 2,123,039 17,001,289 1855... 505,159 105,756 1022,05 2,070,069 17,091,299 1856... 154,510 205,866 1022,05 2,070,069 17,091,299 17,091,295 11,1501 the Legislature authorized the issue of canal certificates for \$9,050,000, in anticipation of the toils, on 11,1552 15,510 000 were borrowed. The Court of Appeals, 11,1552 15,510 000 were borrowed. The Court of Appeals, 11,1552 15,510 000 000 11,1552 15,1510 11,1552 15,1510 11,1552 15,1510 11,1552 15,1510 11,1552 15,1510 11,1552 15,1510 11,1552 15,1510 11,1552 15,1510 11,1552 15,1510 11,1510 1

Efforts of the canal officers by direct taxes to complete to enlargements with seven feet depth of water.

Erec. Expended Energy on all Surplus at close of Totals .. \$1,858,963 2,139,883 19,130,173 27,061,984 1838 1838 1848 1854 1856 2222222 inclusive. inclusive. inclusive. inclusive. inclusive. inclusive. 213 OST OF THE Chemiung. \$347.785 291.785 291.785 383.834 93.683 93.688 268.080 1,150.878 doc by LATERAL Crooked Lake. \$140,674 2 72,948 77,968 20,490 20,282 231,078

DURING THE GREATER POINTION OF THE TERM

DURING THE GREATER POINTION OF THE TERM

of forty years, through which the cost of construction of these five lateral canais was paid from the
canal und, the State was obliged itself to pay interest at the average rate of at least six per cent per
annum, paid anil yearly, on the large sums needed
beyond the surplus revenues from time to time in
hand, for prosecuting the enlargement of the
trunk canals, conclusively showing the necessity
of loans for nearly, if not quite, all of the \$28,081,384
drawn from the canal lund to construct and support the lateral canals. It certainly may explain
why the canal deot, at its maximum in 1860,
should reach \$27,107,521. As a matter merely of
discal account it cannot be unjust or unreasonable
to charge these lateral canais at least simple interest at five per cent per annum from the periods

drawn from the treasury of the State At that moderate rate, the actual cost was, \$28.081,554 Simple interest, at tive per cent..... Total \$553,308,888
It is believed that a careful investigation of this

2.090.651

Total \$63,264 910 The Auditor's report gives no particulars of any expenditure for elarging or improving the Champiain Canal beyond a single item, stating "the cost of the Erie and Champiain canals" at \$50,412,710.

plan Canal beyond a single item, stating "the cost of the Erie and Champlain canals" at \$30,412,710. It gives the particulars, to some extent, in respect to the cost of certain minor works connected with, and accessory to the trunk canals, being the Oneida Lake Canal, the Oneida River Improvement, the Balwinsville Canal, the Cayuga Iniet and the Seneca River Towing Path.

TOTAL COST OF THE CANALS.

It will be sufficient for the present purpose to condense all the canal expenditures for construction under the one general head, presented by the report of the Auditor, showing that the cost of all the canals, rome 1835 to the close of 1874, has been \$67,978,337.

This summary statement necessarily leads to the interesting inquiry, how has the State has raised on temporary loans for definite periods less than haif of all the moneys needed for the purpose, the greater portion of which it has already repaid, and has paid the residue by the surplus tolls of the canals and the proceeds of direct taxes.

In examining the fiscal history of the canals, it will be necessary carefully to consider the large and repeated reductions in the rates of toll (and especially on the immense cereal product of our great interior), as existing in 1835, when the engrangement of the Eric Canal was directed by law, and which have been made for the purposes of commerce.

The rate of \$3.28 per ton on wheat and flour

commerce.
The rate of \$3.28 per ton on wheat and flour from Buffalo to Albany, existing in 1835, remained unchanged until 1846, when it was reduced to \$2.92. It was again reduced in 1851 to \$2.19; again in 1882 to \$2.11, and lastly, in 1870 to \$1.05, at which it still remains, being only 3.1-10c. per busnel.

busnel.

Without entering at the present time into a laborious computation of the precise amount by which these successive reductions of rate have diminished the total sum which the surplus tolks would have yielded to the Treasury, it the rates existing in 1888 had been retained, it may be safely

igntened the burden by widening the basis of taxation.

What the Canals have done.

It certainly cannot be denied that the greatly increased activity imparted to the internal as well as the external commerce of the State, is due almost exclusively to the construction and the use of our canals and railways as the great laboraving machines of interchange and intercourse, annually saving in the cost of transportation, and thereby creating and diffusing yearly a large amount of wealth. When we see that in the lorty years now under review the assessed valuation of the real and personal properts in the State rose from \$528,599,379 in 1833, to \$1,42,309,715 in 1857, and again to \$2,361,950,481 in 1874, we certainly may take courage. Our most timid legislators may even venture to believe and to decide that we are not only able to deepen the water in our trunk canals, but may also, without dangerously enseebiting the fiscal resources of the State, reduce the descending tons on wheat to the two cents a busnel, which was expressly specified and predicted as a possible and eventual rate in the financial report of the Assembly committee in 1838.

Whether such a reduction of rate would practi-

mandat report of the Assembly committee in 1838.

Whether such a reduction of rate would practically diminish at all the pecuniary amount to be received by the State, and whether the diminution of toll will not be fully compensated by the increased amount to be carried, may depend largely on the saving in cost of transportation to be effected by securing the full legal depth of seven feet of water needed for the advantageous use of the canal by boats, whether drawn by norses or propelled by Steam.

PROSPECTIVE INCREASE OF TONIAGE AND COMPETITION.

PROSPECTIVE INCREASE OF TONNAGE AND COMPETITION.

From the best attention, which the committee have been able to devote to the more general inquiry, they see no reason to apprehend that the aggregate amount of cereals now sent from the interior to the port of New York, either by water ways or railways, is destined to any great or serious diminition unless the completion of the enlarged rival canals, now in progress in Canada, should eventually permit them to pass large vessels carrying from 30,000 to 40,000 ousness. We have, in fact, the clearest evidence of a large and grathjing increase in the quantity sent to New York during the last eight years. In 1866 the amount received was 58,352,367 busness, which increased to 69,921,579 in 1869; to 82,137,971 in 1872, and to 106,451,081 in 1874, as shown by the valuable tables, hearly ready for publication, by M. Walker, the able statistician of the New York Produce Exchange, by whose permission the amount for 1874 is now stated.

The total bushels received at New York in 1874

as the measure of the great commercial prize for which these rival Atlantic ports, with their respective water ways and railways, are now contending.

It will be seen that this amount does not in-It will be seen that this amount does not include the receipts at New Orleans, some portion of which may and its way to New York. They amounted, in 1803, to 12,360,436 bushels; in 1871, to 15,250,805, and in 1873, to 12,295,333. A large diversion from the valley of the Mississippi into the great basin of the lakes, and thence down the River St. Lawrence, is seen by the table showing the receipts at Montreal, in 1868, to have been 8,358,367 bushels; in 1871, 14,168,066, and in 1873, 19,713,529.

19,713,519.

Withe we must naturally expect the vigorous English-speaking race now directing the affairs of the "Dominion" to put forth their best efforts (which with se much aliced by the gravitation of their great continental river to the ocean) to participate in the immense commerce of the interior of North America, we have no good reason for supposing that the amount carried infrough New York will not continue to increase, possibly at a slackened rate, with the increase of the producing population in the United States, and in the consuming population in Europe and elsewhere. The remarkable lacuity for incredulity in respect to the commerce of our cannie, manniested for many years by many very worthy people, may possible lead them to apprehend that the power of producing wheat in our country has reached or will soon reach its "culminating point;" to which it may be simply answered that our wheat product of the year 1874 exceeded that of any preceding year; and, further, that the growing desire of Europe 13 consume our lindian corn has been recently manifested in the significant fact that the United States, in the year 1871, exported to Europe 9,64,5036 bushels, and in the year 1873, 40,465,652 bushels.

When it is also considered that the total amount of 185,48,770 bushels received at the Atlantic ports in 1874 is less than one-lourth of the secual yearly product in the states north of the Ohlo River in 1870, as shown by the census, it certainly cannot be very visionary or entails sint to expect that if While we must naturally expect the vigorous nglish-speaking race now directing the affairs

by the census, it certainly cannot be very visionary or enthusiastic to expect that if the navigation of the Eric Canal shall be improved so that steam vessels may largely reduce the cost of transportation the amount it may yearly carry may in due time reach 50,000,000 bushels, on which the toil, at two cents, would be \$1,000,000, exclusive of the toils on all other property, with an additional \$1,000,000 for every additional 50,000,000 bushels.

exclusive of the tolls on all other property, with an additional \$1,000,000 for every additional \$0,000,000 bushels.

THE CANAL DEET.

The interesting table presented by the Auditor, showing in detail the progress of "the canal deut," exhibits its right and growth, with its increase and diminution, from the close of 1835 to the present hour. Divided in historical periods, commencing in 1836, with the debt then existing, of \$6,326,806 (incurred mainly for lateral canals before that period), it increased to \$20,713,906 in 1843; was reduced to \$16,215,144 in 1850, and again increased to \$21,07,321 in 1860, when it reached its "culminating point." From that time it is seen, first slowly, and soon rapidly, descending, under the application of the immense amount of the folls too much ridicated and stigmatized in 1839, and for many succeeding years, 28 wholly "prospective and distonary" and by their powent operation finally worn down at the close of 1874 to the nominal remnant of \$10,230,430, at which it now remains for further reduction, as directed by the constitution. As an act of tarcy justice, plainly due to the early advocates of the loans needed to secure the active progress of the enlargement, most of whom now rest from their lacors in this lower world which they strove to benefit, it is proper, in their benalf, now to claim and insist that it was only the lavish and unexpected expenditures on the lateral canals, and the large but wise reductions of the rates of toll to loster the commerce and welfare, not only of our own commercial State, but of the populous and constantly widening group of agricultural States steadly coming into vigorous and increasing life in the great interior, which prevented the total extinguishment of the canal dect "proper" many years ago, without imposing any direct taxation whatever on our people.

It is especially noped that when our brethren in the interior States shall inly understand that the more generous and lar-seeing pontoy actually pursued by our State not only retarded a re

eaboard.
The intelligent communities which have gone

Schoold.

The intelligent communities which have gone out so largely from our Atlantic States must be unity aware that, apart from the city of New York and its metropolitan dependencies, no part of the American Union is, or ever can be, more largely and vitally benefited by every practicable improvement in the navigation of our trunk canals that their own great seat to industry, it needs but a few of the prominent facts to show how largely and unceasingly the Eric Canal, with all its soort-comings, at every stage and aimid all the lights and snadows of its eventful progress, has been used by fills vast and productive region during the term of forty years how under review.

The "values" of the property coming from and of the property sent to those States in return, through the Eric Canal, in the first seven years of this term, from 1826 to 1843, were \$129,336,937 in the ten years from 1843 to 1863 922,096,598 in the ten years from 1853 to 1863 922,096,598 in the ten years from 1853 to 1863 1,234,785,099

at least enough to secure the very deepening which has now become so plainly necessary.

CANAL LEGISLATION.

With this view the committee will proceed to furnish the statement, specially directed by the Chamber, of "the legislation and the official action of the canal authorities during the last sixteen years, in respect to the depth of water in the Eric Canal."

years, in respect to the depth of water in the Eric Canal."

From the year 1810, and up to the adoption of the constitution of 1846, the sole management direction and construction of the canals had beer intrusted to a Board consisting, first, of five, and afterward of six Canal Commissioners, appointed by concarrent resolution or joint ballot of the Senate and Assembly. The framers of the constitution of 1846, in seeking to reform our canal policy and finances, provided that there canal Commissioners should be chosen by the people of the State at the general election, and should hold their offices respectively for three years. Fortunately, however, the provision wat added that their "powers and dules should be such" as then were or thereafter should be prescribed by law. The latter clause may, if it has not already, become very important in enabling the Legislature (without the officially and delay of an amendment to the constitution requiring a popular vote, which might be deleated by the devices of interested and scheming canal contractors) to prescribe any definition or limitation of those powers or duties which, in the unfinished, inconcrent and fragmentary condition of the canals at present, having no common executive head and menaced by powerful and enterprising rivais, may be deemed necessary to secure the systematic, efficient and judicious management so plainly needed for preserving the commiscre of the State from lutther diversion.

In July, 1855, the death of one of the Canal Commissioners having left a temporary vacancy in the office, the writer of the present paper, who had niled the office of Canal Commissioner irom 1833 to 1842, was appointed to fill the place until the list of January thereafter by John A. King, the Governor of the State. This interval of nearly six months afforded some opportunity for acceptanting the general condition of the canal. In endargement of which had been supposed to be nearly completed, had not a uniform depth even of six feet of water, to which in and been familied From the year 1810, and up to the adoption o

great dissatisaction, delay and loss to the numericous persons engaged or interested in its havigation.

In the month of August of the year 1858 an earnest and well considered effort was made by some of the enterprising citizens of Budalo to introduce steam navigation on the Eric Canal, during which a considerable collection of bears, some of them propelled by steam, took part in an elaborate "Steam Canal Cerebration," attended by Governor King and other State officials, it commenced at Rocaester and terminated at Buffallo, where the event was formally signalized by a general infumination of the city. After saviral voyages by some of the canal steamers, struggling with the difficulties of a new undertaking, the enterprise was brought to an end, partly by the expense of the mel required for the propelling power and the want of adequate room in the boat for a "paying" cargo, but more especially by the frequent and vexatious obstructions in the chained been left unexcavated, or had been allowed to be died up by earth washed in from the sales.

The report here repeats portions of the report of the Canal Commissioners at the close of 1858, concluding with the following suggestions:—

First—That a tax be laid of a min on the dollar and applied to the competion, first, of the enarty, to the other unumshed works in just proportions.

Second—That \$400,000 of that amount be applied

next, to the other unumshed works in just proportions.

Second—That \$400,000 of that amount be applied without delay to the obtaining a channel of seven feet water for the Frie Canally the opening of navigation in the coming spring, or as soon atterward as practicable.

Third—That interest be paid on any claims due for work done or lands or buildings taken for the use of the canals.

Four.M—That until the revenues can be rendered sufficient, by increasing the capacity of the canall or otherwise, to pay the interest on the existing debt, the deficiency be annually ascertained by the Canal Board and levied by tax without further lexislation.

the Canal Board and levied by tax without further legislation.

Fifth—That an amendment to the constitution be submitted to the people, allowing the Legislature to borrow the amount necessary to discharge at existing claims on the canals and to pay for their completion, with such a suking inno as snail suffice to pay the interest and extinguish the principal within a term not exceeding twenty-five or thirty years.

It is a gratifying portion of our canal history that the appeal thus made in 1859 to secure additional funds for completing the chiargement of the canals, and above all for securing without delay their all legal depth of water, was received with such decided favor that the Legislature passed an act on the 6th of April, 1859, laying a

that the appeal thus made in 1859 to secure and into the canais, and above all for securing without delay their null legal depth of waier, was received with such decided havor that the Legislature passed an act on the cit of April, 1850, haying a direct tax of nwe-eighths of a mill on the dolar, and from the proceeds appropriating \$07,505 for the enlargement of the Erre, the Oswego, the Cayuga and sement of the Erre, the Oswego, the Cayuga and sement of the Erre, the Oswego, the Cayuga and sement of the Erre, the Oswego, the Cayuga and sement of the Erre, the Oswego, the Cayuga and sement of the April, 1850, imposing a further exor half a mill on the dollar for two years, and appropriating \$1,13,117 for the three constrements, and expressly "to furnish an additional and ample supply of water on the Rome level" (where it was peculiarly needed), "sufficient to make it at all times seven feet deep."

In the Legislature of 1859 a great desire was manifested to ascertain without delay the extent of the osstructions in the canais and to obtain some definite information for estimating at least approximately the probable cost of securing the seven feet depth of water, and especially for ascertaining, by some unerring test, whether any considerable portions of the quantilies required to be excavated for completing the enlargement to the prescribed depth and paid for as having been completed, had been fradulently or carelessly left unexcavated in the bottom of the canais, it led to the passage of an act on the 19th of April, 1850, on the recommendation of many of the canai averagers and the security of the canai and the respect to the powers and duries of the Canai commissioners, in the following words:—

Section 9.—85 long as any canai in this State shall be left and under contract—like first canai was thus left and under contract—like first canai was thus left and under contract—like first canai was thus left and under contract—like first canai was the first purpose of the year 1851—to be kept in repairs in pursuance o

navigation of the canals or in the nistory of theil progress.

DEFTH OF THE WATER.

For the general purpose of the present paper, which is to furnish all the attainable information in respect to the extent of the obstacles preventing the State and the country from obtaining the great boon of seven leet of water, the main subject of the studgle of the last forty years, it may be enough to point to that portion of the report which condenses details and technical portions in the general statement, that of 345 mines of the Eric Canal, the depth of water, in September, 1861, was found to be as follows:

In various portions and in various localities, having an aggregate lineal length of cumtices miles, the depth of water varied from 5 8-10 feet to 6 2-10 feet.

In other portions, having an aggregate lineal

other portions, having an aggregate lines

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